A Research Proposal of the Ph.D Thesis

On

Individual and Modern Age: A Study of The Image of Woman In Adrienne Rich's Poetry

In Partial fulfillment for the award of the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN
ENGLISH

Submitted by

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A SYNOPSIS

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CANDIDATE'S DECLARATION

I, Marifat Akther, D/O Ali Mohammad Baba certify that the materialembodied in the present work entitled **Individual an Modern Age: A Syudy of the Image of Women in Adrienne Rich's Poetry** under the supervision of Dr. Irshad Ahmad Itoo, is based on my original research. It has not been submitted in part or full for any other diploma of degree of any university.

My indebtedness to other works has been duly acknowledged at the relevant places.

Countersigned By:

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INTRODUCTION

Women and men often perceive the world differently and have recorded their unique experiences in different ways. Women writers have had to adopt various strategies for them to counter the patriarchal literary tradition. The male literary tradition has advocated objective, impersonal, erudite and political writing. Women on the other hand believe that the personal is political. Written in a simpler language, their writing has been more communicative, realistic and personal, not obscure or arrogant. Instead of expressing cosmic visions, some have written about their own experiences and their relationships with husbands, lovers, mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, children and other women. Others have written about their thoughts and feelings, their minds and bodies and their joys and sorrows. All of them have evolved unique and individual ways of expressing themselves. Despite resistance from a society with an intrinsic anti-feminist bias, women's writing has emerged as a new literary tradition with a large body of work in the later half of the twentieth century.

The predicament of women poets has been doubly difficult. They have had to find a voice where practically none existed before the twentieth century. Women poets have had to face fierce criticism in their efforts to overcome the double-bind and express themselves in their own particular language, delineating their personal experiences. The traditional concept of a woman, as described and explained primarily by men, is far from the truth. Today, feminist poets are consciously seeking to destroy the double-bind, to erase the boundary between woman and poet. They are fighting for themselves, the recovery of their lost identities, and the right of being. In addition to several other women, Adrienne Rich and Anne Sexton are two poets, who through their poetry, portray a strong urge to break free of patriarchal forces and wish to satisfy their inner urge of self expression. Power politics between male and female forces plays a major role in their poetry.

Adrienne Rich is one of the most representative poets of the women's movement. Her poetry is a remarkable fusion of her art and her ideology. Her life and poetry are awe-inspiring and her commitment to feminism commendable. The growth of her personal and poetic life mirrors the growth of the women's struggle for affirmation. Rich accepts her Jewish identity and is happy to acknowledge it as her own. She declares her lesbianism too. She is hailed as one of the most popular poets of America. She is a champion for just causes and she fights for the down-trodden and the neglected, especially the women in her society.

Considering the works of the Rich and re-reading her works in the light of the theories of humanistic psychology, it can be confidently stated that attaining self-actualization is her goal in life.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Adreinne Rich's 'Divine into the Wreck' (1973) One of the Rich' most important poems on the subject of women's rights and the individuals journey of self- discovery.The poem is rich with

symbolism related to the variety of subjects, for example exploration of personal identity and people's relationship to the past- both their own, and that of society in general. The poem also represents the established ideas ,norms, and stories about the wreck (metaphorically speaking , about the speaker or society at large).the poem thus also becomes a kind of call for venturing into the grievous unknown in order to find the truth.

Adrienne Rich 'Living in Sin'(2015). the poet depicts in this poem a sharp contrast between women's expectations and reality and delineated beautifully a woman's relationship and how reality does not come close to what she hoped it would be. Her world was supposed to be filled with romance and happiness, but that's not how it turned out. She has to struggle through her routine and the mundane day-in and day-out patterns they move through. The phrase 'Living in Sin' implies that, by living together without marring, this couple is defying their era's social conventions. In practice, though, their relationship looks like a lot many old- fashioned marriages, in which men's career come first while women get stuck with domestic tasks, whatever, ambitions, dreams or goals she might have disappeared under housework.

Adrienne Rich's poem ' Aunt Jennifer's Tigers'(1951), describes a woman's needlepoint project, the images she is depicting, and how they relate to her own life. The images on her project of those of tigers moving through a green landscape, vibrant landscape. The unnamed speaker, who is likely Jennifer's niece or nephew, describes how fearless these creatures are in the face of the men who watch them. While it is not stated explicitly, it is clear the speaker is trying to compare the tigers and their freedom to the lack of freedom that Jennifer has. The main themes are those of marriage, equal rights, and grief.

Adrienne Rich (1929-2012). The Snapshots of a Daughter- in- Law by Adrienne Rich is a sarcastic feministic poem in which multiple facets of a woman's life have been explored The life which is inflicted with sorrows and male exploitation. The poem is all about anxiety of a modern woman. At the end, the poem explodes into a divesting weapon for the mighty and right of women.

Adrienne Rich 'Tonight No Poetry Will Serve (2011), is a multilayered poem. The poet imbued it with many complex sexual and political innuendoes about power. Readers have to be very cautious while interpreting '*Tonight No Poetry Will Serve'* since there are certain words in the poem referring to different meanings. Those meanings make this poem more objective and interesting. The romantic plot at the beginning of the poem suddenly changes and moves into a totally new direction. The political and sexual innuendos hidden strategically in between the lines deserve more attention from the readers. Otherwise, the poem remains just a piece of incoherent versification of the modern age.

Mohamad Fleih (2015) Adrienne Rich (1929-2012) is a representative poet of American women's poetry. The subject of female identity is a dominant theme of American feminist poetry and Rich plays the leading role in search of this identity. Rich couldn't find herself as a woman writer in the language she uses because it is a symbolic masculine language; therefore, she introduced a new possibility of actualizing the female identity through the restructuring of this language. Thus, the objective of the study is to trace the semiotic aspect of language in Rich's diving into the wreck to see the role of this semiotic aspect in subverting the fixed-meanings of the symbolic language, which in turn leads to the resurface of the buried female voices within this language.

Malik Muzamil Muzaffar (2017) Poetry is the most powerful weapon to raise your voice against social injustice. Women have always used poetry to portray their plight from the dawn of civilizations. Although poetry as a weapon to express atrocities against women is not that old, folk songs of women from any country are brimmed with these ideals. Women have been the subject of men from ancient times because literature was in their hands. Adrienne Rich is fully conscious of this fact. The focus of this discourse is to analyze the relationship between gender and language within the framework of Adrienne Rich's poetry. One of the major concerns for feminist is the search for characteristic female language by which they can get freedom from male subjection and through which they can express their feelings in a more feminine way. Rich has done a commendable job to find some sort of solution to this quest. Her poetry is characteristically compiled in female language.

Md. Jahidul Azad (2019) This paper talks about Adrienne Rich's support and standing with the women through her selected poems. The paper discusses the depression of women because of male dominance. Rich uses symbolism to display women depression. She also tries to clear the position of woman in the society. The research demonstrates the position of women through psychoanalysis, social problems and female point of view. This paper also tries to identify Rich's view on feminism. Adrienne Rich has highlighted the hard reality in her writings. This paper also clarifies Adrienne Rich's thinking or point view regarding feminism and sexuality. Her experiences regarding the depression of women are displayed here through symbolism. Thus, the focal point of the paper is to show how Adrienne Rich shows female depression through symbolism.

Jeevan Kumar (2013) Adrienne Cecile Rich (1929-2012) comes before the readers as the most promising poet and essayist in contemporary American literature. She is a multi-talented writer, polemist, literary theorist and an exponent of a poetry of witness and dissent, a poetry that voices the discontent of those generally silenced and ignored. She is a political poet whose ideology is rooted in early American experience. Her prophecy of the community of women and of female energy free from patriarchal repression parallels the Puritan vision. She urges the world to open its gates to everyone regardless of gender, race, or class, and feels that the feminist vision of the

community of women would be the beginning of a new chapter in American history. In the present paper, a study has been made on Adrienne Rich's Snapshots of a Daughter-in-Law, an overtly feminist poem that stands out as a watershed in her poetic development.

Nodeh, Soghra (2015) The phallogocentric structure of language privileges the male in construction of meaning throughout the patriarchal history which allows no place for feminine writing. Opposing what Lacan calls as phallogocentric discourse, poststructuralist feminists exhort to what Cixous terms as "écriture feminine" as the inscription of female difference in language and text. Therefore, viewing women's difference as a source (of imagery) rather than a point of inferiority to men, Rich rediscovers female experiences in her poems through using "écriture feminine" and thus exhibits the productivity and plurality of women's language. Hence, the present study, looking from the perspective of Cixous's "écriture feminine," aims at analyzing female modes of writing in Rich's poems. The main finding of the research is that, through using genuine female forms of expression as opposed to phallogocentric structure of expression, Rich brings into being the symbolic weight of female consciousness, illustrating the oppressive forces that obstruct female expression.

Tuhina Mukherjee (2015) The research paper attempts to analyze the poetic volume Diving into the Wreck: Poems 1971 - 1972 by Adrienne Rich from a feminist perspective. Feminism is the way of looking at the world from women's point of view. It refers to the desire to change women's position in the society. It is the advocacy of the rights of women – the right to live free of sexual, physical, psychological and economic abuse; the right to be independent, confident, competent and respectable citizens of a nation. Beginning with a brief introduction of Adrienne Rich as a poet and radical feminist the article critically analyses the volume Diving into the Wreck: Poems 1971 – 1972. This is the seventh volume of poetry by Rich, published in 1973. She received the National Book Award for this volume. Diving into the Wreck reveals Rich's revolutionary anger for being graded as second-class citizens. The basic life events like love, sex, marriage and motherhood have been described from a feminist perspective. Rich not only presents the real state of affairs but also provides a solution to survive tragic, oppressive patriarchal laws.

Adrienne Rich. (1929-2012) The Snapshots of a Daughter- in- Law by Adrienne Rich is a sarcastic feministic poem in which multiple facets of a woman's life have been explored. The life which is inflicted with sorrows and male exploitation. The poem is all about anxiety of a modern woman. At the end, the poem explodes into a devastating weapon for the might and right of women.

GAPS IN RESEARCH

There is a close interrelationship between the world of poetry and the real world outside, especially in the case of women's writings. Poetry for women represents the experience and the oppressions which they have undergone throughout history. Therefore, the prerequisite to understanding

women's literature, its specialty and difference, is "to reconstruct its past, to rediscover the scores of women novelists, poets and dramatists whose work has been obscured by time and to establish the continuity of female tradition from decade to decade" (Showalter, 1979, p. 35). Through this method, one can trace the patterns and phases of the evolution of female tradition, which is parallel to the phases of the development of any "sub cultural art", through which one can "challenge the periodicity of orthodox literary history, and its enshrined canons of achievement" (Showalter, 1979, p. 35). Such a systematic exploration of women's writing enlightens one's awareness of political, social and cultural experiences of women. Such burst of radical themes, modes of expression and writing in women's writing, as opposed to the dominant male patterns of expression and masculine aesthetics and modes of writing, could be traced in Adrienne Rich's writing. In a society where language becomes an instrument in the hands of the males, Rich undergoes a risky project through which she evades the "discourse that regulates the phallogocentric system" and uses feminine writing or "ecriture feminine"

HYPOTHESES

The hypothesis for my proposed research work will focus on the following points.

1. Confessional poets like Anne Sexton and Adrienne Rich have tried to explore the female issues in their poetry in order to give wings to their feministic thought.
2. American confessional poets more particularly Adrianne rich, Anne Sexton and Sylvia Plath have always tried to portray the topography of mind of women of the age.
3. Adrienne Rich mostly used her poetic art to make statements of activism.

OBJECTIVE

1. To analyze the Feministic Anguish in the poetry of Adrienne Rich's poetry.
2. To study the awareness, confrontation and identity of self in Rich's poetry.
3. To study the concept of self-actualization and analyses the different aspects of humanistic psychology as depicted by Adrienne Rich.
4. To study the experiences of a majority of the women in the modern world.

PROPOSED METHODOLOGY

The research methodology in the present investigation will be exploratory, interpretative, evaluative and analytical. Diverse themes in the selected books are contemplated. The primary data will be collected with the assistance of the selected books. It will be additionally collected with the assistance of dialog with policy makers, administrators, journalist and adolescents. The secondary data will be collected from numerous resources like visiting to various Libraries, Books, Research Journals, Internet, Magazine, and Literary Columns in Newspapers, Official Website and Speeches. Moreover, the researcher will thoroughly analyze the psycho-analytical theory by Sigmund Freud and the Grounded theory of research given by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss. Besides, the

researcher will also analyze all the important theories of feminism. All through the research work while showing the citations and references MLA handbook's 8th addition is to be utilized**.**

TENTATIVE CHAPTER PLAN

Chapter 1: Introduction.

Chapter 2: Confessional Manifestation of Rich's Poetry.

Chapter 2: A feminist reading of Adrianne Rich's Poetry.

Chapter 3: Self Actualization and Individualism in Rich's Poetry.

Chapter 4: Adrianne Rich and the Constructive bonding between Women and Society.

Chapter 5: Conclusion.

TIMELINE OF THE RESEARCH WORK

First six months of the research duration would be spent on collecting, arranging segregating the relevant material related with primary and secondary sources. The next semester would be devoted for preparing the introductory part of the research. far as the five chapters are concerned, it would take around a year to go through all the primary and secondary texts and to develop the requisite understanding in putting the relevant material as per the need and requirement of the chapter. The last chapter i.e. sixth chapter which lays emphasis on the theoretical concerns in relation with the works selected and will require at least two semesters to be devoted for giving every idea the most appropriate shape. The last semester would be devoted to write the research conclusion based on the textual analysis of the selected works.

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